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GEN. BENJAMIN F. BUTLER'S

TRUE RECORD.



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## BENJ. F. BUTLER,

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## THE RECORD OF BENJAMIN F. BUTLER.

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"If private character were a good ground of indorsement, the friends of Gen. Butler would have a strong candidate, for we believe his private life is above reproach, and unusually pure."

So said, in September, 1879, "The Boston Post," a paper politically intensely hostile to Gen. Butler.

His public career covers a period of over a quarter of a century. During that period his utterances upon the great public questions of our momentous history have been frank, and bold almost to audacity. He has, at critical times in our country's life, occupied prominent positions in the State and National Legislatures, in the field, and in military administration. His public life has been in sight of all men, and has made bitter enemies as well as enthusiastic friends.

That malignant enmity should ransack the dictionary to find words savage enough to be thrown at Gen. Butler, is not surprising. Every great man has this experience. Washington, — a patriot is almost humiliated when he reads the shameless abuse poured out upon this illustrious man by American citizens. Jackson, — his political opponents were frantic in their furious calumnies against the hero of New Orleans. No epithets were too vile to be hurled at Abraham Lincoln, even up to the day when he fell by the assassin's bullet.

Why has Gen. Butler been so savagely maligned? The spirit of party is, of course, the main reason. But there are some special reasons. He has been the uncompromising advocate of equal rights; and so he has offended the oligarchy who assume superior dignity and authority in Massachusetts. He has boldly defended the poor, the oppressed, the friendless; and so he has drawn upon himself the wrath of despotic corporations and their purchased allies. He has been too great to be trammelled by party rules, or to be submissive to party rings; and so he has earned the bitter hostility of party managers.

Nevertheless it seems strange that even party enmity or moneyed greed should seek to obscure one of the brightest names in American history. The *people* need only to remember *facts*. It needs only a *reasonably candid* look at the public record of this eminent citizen, both in relation to the State and to the Union, to see how despicable are the cavils against the grandly patriotic and unselfish service of Benjamin F. Butler. And the best answer to the mean assaults of anonymous writers, inspired by their hold on public office, is a brief recapitulation of the public record of this great man.

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Benjamin F. Butler was born Nov. 5, 1818, in Deerfield, N.H. His mother was of the sturdy race from the North of Ireland. His father's mother was daughter of that eminent soldier of the Revolution, Col. Joseph Cilley; and his father's father was a captain in the same glorious army. His father, Capt. John Butler, commanded a company of dragoons in the war of 1812, and served with the heroic Andrew Jackson. Benjamin F. Butler came from an

*Honest, brave, and patriotic stock.*

His father died in 1819, away from home, while commanding a vessel to the West Indies. The widow was left with scanty means, and with two sons, one of whom, Benjamin F., was then but five months old. The brave New-England mother shrank from no responsibility. Eventually she removed to Lowell, Mass., and opened a boarding-house. It was successful, and she was able to help in sending the studious boy, who was passionately fond of books, to Waterville College (now Colby University), where he graduated in 1838. He was then twenty years old. Not strong in health, he at once went on a fishing-voyage of four months, lived on sailors' fare, and did sailors' work, and returned with that robust constitution which

*Strict temperance in all his habits*

has preserved. It is well known that no man can do more work or endure more fatigue than Benjamin F. Butler.

He entered at once on the study of law. He was not nursed in the lap of luxury. Too poor to go on without help, and too self-reliant to accept it, he worked his own way by teaching school in Lowell, in turn with study of law. When twenty-two years old he was admitted to the bar, and began first in Lowell that brilliant career which has made him famous.

*Many of his early clients*

were factory-girls. It was hard, then, for a factory-girl to obtain justice against the great corporations, inasmuch as she could not pay the fees demanded by lawyers. Few lawyers dared even to undertake their cases. One lawyer did, and the corporations crushed him. Wealth, political power, and tyranny were allied. Benjamin F. Butler undertook such cases; if necessary, without fee or reward. He did it as he has since done for soldiers and sailors. It may be said of Gen. Butler, that in the whole course of his practice he has never charged or received, from any soldier or sailor, or the widow, mother, or orphan of any soldier or sailor, one cent in the shape of a fee for services as attorney or agent in obtaining pensions, bounty, or back pay. And Gen. Butler has collected many thousands of such

*Claims for the veterans of the war,*

and for the surviving relatives of those who died in the service of their country. What Republican candidate can show such a record of unostentatious generosity? Ask old soldiers who have had work done by a now celebrated firm in Boston, in which is a Republican candidate, "what was *their* share in the returns?"

The pluck and success of Benjamin F. Butler disturbed the mill-owners and their allies. The rings of favor, friends, and inheritance, wealth and aristocratic position, ceased to despise him. Overtures were made to him, which he in turn despised. He believed in *justice*. He was *of the people*. He encountered from that time the malignant hostility of certain classes. It showed itself at the bar, in business, in social life. It tried to baffle and crush him in the war, although to do so was to side with treason! Since the war, it has transferred its hatred to political life. It is the same spirit of caste, overbearing wealth, and tyranny, which began to abuse Benjamin F. Butler, when, a young man, they found he could not be used to buttress the fortunes of the then ruling oligarchy.

But he succeeded at the bar. By intense industry, laborious study, and the advantages of his commanding and versatile intellect, he became a necessity; and rich clients came, from whom he commanded rich fees.

It is needless to suggest his eminence as a lawyer. By his own efforts he has succeeded in life. Not an instance is found where a single dollar of his property has come by any unlawful means, either from persons or the State. The fact that he is above all temptation to private greed, with the fact of his legal habit of mind in seeing instinctively even the hidden motives and actions

of men, his power of detecting eminently respectable shams at sight, and his intensity of resolute power, makes the rings and commissions dread his election as

*Governor of Massachusetts.*

#### POLITICAL.

Gen. Butler's political principles were Democratic. They were his by inheritance and by instinct. His theories were modeled substantially on those of Jefferson, and not on those of the old Federalists. He believed that

*All men are equal before the law.*

This principle and its opposite have always been at war in Massachusetts, under various party names. Gen. Butler believes in no *privileged classes*. A late anonymous campaign assault upon Butler, circulated by the Republican State Committee, quotes and indorses "The Atlantic Monthly." But it forgets to quote a *very imprudent statement* of that same "Monthly," viz., —

"It is the traditional right of certain hereditary families to control the politics of Massachusetts!"

No wonder that the "Monthly," and those who indorse it, do not like Benjamin F. Butler!

When Butler began his profession, Massachusetts was a Whig State, Middlesex was a Whig county, and Lowell was a Whig city. The Whig party appeared to be impregnable. That very year it swept the whole country like a whirlwind. Had Butler been an office-seeker, he had only to join the dominant party. A young man of his intellectual and executive ability was a prize. For an office-seeker, the Whig party was the place. It had in Massachusetts, not only the numbers, but vastly the wealth and the social position. The young lawyer passed it all by, and apparently ruined all his chances, when he took his place with the hopeless minority, and adhered to its desperate fortunes. He did it because he was then, as now,

*True to his convictions, at whatever sacrifice.*

*The labor-reform question,*

however, early became prominent. Gen. Butler's sympathies were with the weak. The struggle with the corporations, begun in 1850, was to lessen the *thirteen hours' daily work* wickedly ex-

torted from the operatives in mills. In that struggle, Mr. Butler was in 1852 a candidate for the legislature, on that ticket. The lordly dictation of the mill-managers took an open form. A few days before election, a notice was posted in the various mills in the following language : —

**"Any man who votes the Ben Butler ten-hour ticket will be discharged."**

Butler spoke at an immense meeting of the citizens. In words of burning eloquence he denounced this shameless interference with liberty. He said, —

**"I do not counsel revolution or violent measures; for I do not, I *can not*, believe that the notice posted in the mills was authorized. Some ignorant underling has done this with the hope of propitiating the favor of distant masters; mis-judging them, mis-judging you. The owners of the mills are surely too wise, too just, or at least too prudent, to authorize a measure which absolutely extinguishes government, which invites, justifies, and necessitates anarchy. For tyranny less odious than this, men of Massachusetts, our fathers cast off their allegiance to the king, and plunged into the bloody chaos of revolution; and the directors must know that the sons stand ready to do as their sires have done before them. But if it should prove true that this infamous notice *was* authorized, if men are to be deprived even of the enjoyment of the primeval curse, 'By the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat thy bread,' for exercising the right of an American citizen to vote as their consciences dictate, then, WOE TO LOWELL!"**

He calmed the excited audience, and closed with saying, —

**"My friends, go home, obey the laws, do no act of violence; and, when election-day comes, vote as your judgment shall dictate, without regard to personal consequences. Wait till overt acts of treason to liberty and law shall come from the other side."**

The notice was withdrawn. Butler was triumphantly elected.

The eleven-hour bill became a law. At this late date, twenty-six years after, it is alleged that Gen. Butler was faithless, inasmuch as his name is not recorded on its passage. In fact, to his efforts much was due, and the passage of the bill was certain, when Butler, then a military officer, was necessarily absent on military duty on the day of the passage of the bill. The confidence of the suffering advocates of labor-reform in Gen. Butler was henceforth unhesitating. On somewhat similar issues, and by similar votes, he was chosen to the Senate in 1859, having also been a member of the Constitutional Convention of 1853, where he was chairman of very important committees.

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A late attack undertakes to represent him as oppressing the laborer. It gives assumed tables of dividends and wages in the Middlesex Mill, in which Gen. Butler is an owner. By that

table it would appear that the mill has been paying, during the last ten years, from nine to seventeen per cent annually. If this be so, — yet the writer *happened to forget* what has been *repeatedly printed*, that the stock had been scaled down from one thousand to one hundred dollars a share; that is, stock on which one thousand dollars were actually paid in cash is now reckoned at a par of only one hundred, and had gone as low as to fifty dollars per share, by losses. A dividend of ten per cent on the present par of a hundred dollars is only *one* per cent on what the shares actually originally cost!

This assault purports to contrast wages paid a year ago by the Middlesex Mill with wages paid by the Talbot Mill, which Mill, the recent anonymous document sent out by the ring-managers says, for an evident purpose, is in Lowell! The writer omits several facts: First, that mills in the country, without advantages as to schools, churches, and cheap markets, always must pay higher to get operatives. Secondly, the writer seems to be ignorant that the question came up three years ago, whether to run the Middlesex Mill at a loss. If it stopped, it must turn the operatives out to hunger and cold, but it could sell its raw material for profit enough to declare a *ten per cent dividend*. The directors decided to *keep on*. They made *no dividend*, and *sunk seventy-five thousand dollars besides*, rather than deprive their operatives of a chance to get their bread! Such is the record of Gen. Butler as a Director.

Still further. The assailant has *gone back a year* to take just the time when, in anticipation of a disastrous business, wages had been reduced. Gen. Butler had more faith; and, although not at home, advised against the reduction. But the assailant naturally *suppresses the fact*, that, last Christmas, the business having proved unexpectedly favorable, the mill added to *every operative* six months in its employ, five per cent of wages, over and above all his pay, as a present!

More than all: in the whole twenty years in which Gen. Butler has been connected with that mill, there has been no strike, no friction, no difficulty of any kind, and, of course, no defalcations. The bunting-mills and the cartridge-mills, in both of which he is a large owner, pay the *highest wages paid in Lowell*!

Gen. Butler was a member of the Democratic party. He was delegate to every one of its national conventions from 1844 to 1860. In 1859 he received the large vote of over 50,000 as its candidate for governor, but when, of course, election was hopeless.

On the 22d of May, 1856, Gen. Butler was in Washington, on

his way as delegate to one of these Democratic National Conventions, of that year. On that day, Preston S. Brooks made his cowardly and brutal assault on Senator Sumner. Instantly, although a political opponent, Gen. Butler openly and unsparingly condemned the outrage, and at once called upon Mr. Sumner to express his warm sympathy. The wounds had not then even been dressed. Mr. Sumner received him most cordially, and they were always afterwards in the most pleasant relations, until the senator's severe denunciation of President Grant, when Gen. Butler sided with the President.

But, on the evening of the same day in which Gen. Butler had openly gone to the side of the great Massachusetts senator, and in the very hotel where Gen. Butler was indignantly denouncing the crime, some Massachusetts gentlemen gave a dinner to Preston S. Brooks; and at the dinner, "The Boston Traveller" of Sept. 17, 1879, tells us, was a gentleman now an honored Republican Representative in Congress from Massachusetts!

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The position of the Northern Democrats was peculiar. Not believing in slavery, yet they believed that the Constitution left such questions to the several States. Right or wrong, this was their conviction, and they adhered to the Constitution as they understood it. When the great questions which led to the war were before the country, they were willing to go as far as possible in concessions to the South, because they knew the temper of the South. While some Northern men were ridiculing the idea that the South would fight, such men as Butler knew the South better, and knew that it meant "fight." They saw the horrible prospect before the country, and they could see nothing but blackness. Their prophecies were correct. But when the Southern States had themselves broken all the guaranties of the Constitution, the way was clear. Northern Constitutional Democrats were untrammelled, and they had no hesitation in their love for the flag.

In the Democratic Convention of 1860, Gen. Butler was a delegate. In obedience to the wishes of his constituents, seven times he voted for Stephen A. Douglas. It was evident that his nomination was entirely impossible, and Gen. Butler, of course, was then free to vote as he deemed best. In his address to his constituents, after his return, he said, —

"With the facts before me, and impressing upon me the conviction that the nomination of Judge Douglas could not be made with any hope of safety to the Democratic party, what was I to do? Yielding to your preferences. I voted seven times for Judge Douglas, although my judgment

told me that my votes were worse than useless, as they gave him an appearance of strength in the convention which I felt he had not in the party.

"I then looked about me, with a view to throwing my vote where, at least, it would not mislead any one. I saw a statesman of national fame, who had led his regiment to victory at Buena Vista, a Democrat with whom I disagreed in some things, but with whom I could act in most; loving his country first, his section next, but just to all, so that, through his endeavors in the Senate of the United States, Massachusetts obtained from the General Government several hundred thousand dollars, her just dues deferred for forty years, — a feat which none of her own sons had ever been able to accomplish. Besides, his friends were not pressing his name before the convention, so that he was not a party to the personal strife then going on. I thought such a man worthy of the poor compliment of a vote from Massachusetts; therefore I threw my vote for Jefferson Davis of Mississippi. I make no apology for that vote. I believe it was guided by an intelligent view of the situation."

The result was the division of the Democratic party, and the election of Abraham Lincoln.

In December, 1860, Gen. Butler met the Democratic leaders who were at Washington for consultation. Gen. Butler, on visiting his Southern friends, found that most of them regarded secession as an accomplished fact. Butler, Breckenridge, and a few others in vain tried to stem the torrent.

"What does this mean?" asked Butler of a prominent Southern man, soon after his arrival in Washington.

"It means simply what it appears to mean. The Union is dead. The experiment is finished. The attempt of two communities having no interest in common, abhorring one another, to make believe they are one nation, has ceased forever. We shall establish a sound, homogeneous government, with no discordant elements. We shall have room for our Northern friends. Come with us."

"Have you counted the cost? Do you really think you can break up this Union? Do *you* think so yourself?"

"I do."

"You are, then, prepared for civil war? You mean to bring this matter to the issue of arms?"

"Oh, there will be no war! the North won't fight."

"The North *will* fight."

"The North won't fight."

"The North *will* fight."

"The North can't fight. We have friends enough at the North to prevent it."

"You have friends at the North as long as you remain true to the Constitution and the Union. But, let me tell you, the moment it is seen that you mean to break up the country, that moment the North is a unit against you. I can answer at least for Massachusetts. She is good for ten thousand men to march at once against armed secession."

"Massachusetts is not such a fool. If your State should send ten thousand men to preserve the Union against Southern secession, she would have to fight twice ten thousand of her own citizens at home, who will oppose such a policy."



“‘No, sir: when we come from Massachusetts to fight for the Union, we shall not leave a single traitor behind, unless he is hanging on a tree.’

“‘Well, we shall see.’

“‘You *will* see. I know something of the North, and a good deal about New England. We are pretty quiet there now, because we don’t believe you mean to carry out your threats. But let me tell you this: as sure as you attempt to break up this Union, the North will resist the attempt, to its last man and its last dollar. You are as certain to fail as there is a God in heaven. One thing you may do: you may ruin the Southern States, and extinguish your institution of slavery. From the moment the first gun is fired upon the American flag, your slaves will not be worth five years’ purchase.’

“‘The North won’t fight.’

“‘The North *will* fight.’

“‘Do you mean to say that you yourself would fight in such a cause?’

“‘I would,’ said Gen. Butler, ‘and, by the grace of God, I will.’”

With all that was done by others, it is perfectly well known that had not such Northern Democrats as were represented by Benjamin F. Butler, John A. Logan, John A. Dix, and Daniel S. Dickinson, cast their strength into the side of the Union, with the great rank and file the party furnished, the Union must have perished.

Gen. Butler at once consulted with Senator Wilson, and returned to Massachusetts. He earnestly advised Gov. Andrew to have the militia in readiness. Gov. Andrew could hardly believe that war was impending, but adopted vigorous measures. Gen. Butler urged that overcoats be purchased; and this was the origin of the famous order; that all men not ready to go, be discharged, and others enlisted; and thus the State was ready.

Massachusetts has not yet forgotten the 15th of April, 1861. Fort Sumter had fallen. At a quarter before five that afternoon, the order from Gov. Andrew to Gen. Butler, then in court trying a case, to have the old Sixth mustered on Boston Common forthwith. All night the summons passed to the scattered men, and the brave Col. Jones reported on Boston Common the next day at eleven o’clock. Gov. Andrew and Gen. Butler stood together to address the troops. That day came an order from Washington for a full brigade and a brigadier-general. It was procured by Gen. Butler’s efforts. Gen. Butler had enlisted in the glorious old Sixth as a private when he was twenty-two years of age. He had risen by successive promotions to be brigadier-general, but he was only third in rank. Burning for service, he obtained the appointment to lead this brigade to Washington; and he left, with the Eighth Regiment, the next day. He left nearly *five hundred* unfinished law-cases behind him, for four years’ service!

Massachusetts men have not forgotten the events of that march. Gen. Butler’s men were feasted in New York, were continuously

cheered across New Jersey, and arrived in Philadelphia on the memorable

*Nineteenth of April,*

to learn of the bloodshed in the Sixth in Baltimore, and that the bridges were destroyed. Gen. Butler's orders were to go to Washington. He determined on his plan, and laid it before his officers, but said, "I take the whole responsibility upon myself." He took his troops to Havre de Grace, seized the "Maryland," steamed sixty-four miles to Annapolis, met with only hostile words from the State government, saved the old ship "Constitution." He found a small, rusty, damaged locomotive. Charles Homans looked at it, and said, "Our shop made that engine, general. I guess I can put her in order, and run her." Gen. Butler rebuilt the railroad which had been damaged by rebels; in this as in other service, being the leader of soldiers as earnest, as patriotic, and as devoted as himself. He would have gone to Washington, but the "Department of Annapolis" was at once created, Gen. Butler in command. Troops passed through, thousands in a day. Spies were arrested, and the Legislature watched. In the inexperience of commanding officers, even the immense endurance of Gen. Butler was tasked to meet the exigencies of every detail.

Baltimore was still in the hands of the rebels, and their forces were increasing. On the 29th of April, Lieut.-Gen. Winfield Scott communicated his plan for capturing Baltimore. It was as follows:—

"I suppose that a column from this place [Washington] of three thousand men, another from New York of three thousand men, a third from Perryville or Elkton, by land or water, of three thousand men, and a fourth from Annapolis, by water, of three thousand men, might suffice." "Col. Mansfield has satisfied me that we want at least ten thousand additional troops here to give security to the Capitol." "With that addition we will be able, I think, to make the detachment for Baltimore."

Gen. Butler got tired of waiting for the grand campaign of twelve thousand men. He carefully investigated the state of affairs, and found that a bold stroke was feasible. Baltimore was in his department. He loaded trains with troops; deceived the spies by feint of moving towards Harper's Ferry; entered Baltimore in a fearful thunder-storm, by night; occupied Federal Hill; and when morning dawned the astonished city found Gen. Butler in peaceable control, and

*The old flag flying.*

But Gen. Scott was indignant that Butler, with nine hundred

men and two guns, had done what *he* insisted would take twelve thousand men! Instead of thanking him, he wrote:—

“Sir, your hazardous occupation of Baltimore was made without my knowledge, and, of course, without my approbation. It is a godsend that it was without conflict of arms.”

The fact was, that Gen. Butler thought that war might be rather “hazardous,” and that fighting traitors might possibly run the chance of “conflict of arms!” The indignant lieutenant-general insisted on his removal from command, and the withdrawal of the troops. Gen. Butler went to Washington to receive a reprimand, and did so; but President Lincoln at once made him major-general of volunteers. It was the *first* appointment made, although others were afterwards falsely made to antedate his. “I always said,” wrote Secretary-of-War Cameron, “that, if you had been left at Baltimore, the Rebellion would have been of short duration.” Another instance of his forethought and of the evil which might have been avoided was this: Manassas Junction, he suggested to the general-in-chief, and not Arlington Heights, was the place where Washington should be defended. He offered to march with two thousand men, destroy the railroad-connections with the South, and fortify the position. There were then no rebels there. Gen. Scott negatived the proposal. The Committee on the Conduct of the War afterwards said that this omission was “the great error of the campaign.”

President Lincoln appreciated his gallant service, and appointed him to command Fortress Monroe. He stopped in Washington long enough to make a brief address, in answer to the popular demand. Its key-note was, —

“To us our country is first, because it is our country; and our State is next and second, because she is part of our country, and is our State. Our oath of allegiance to our country, and our oath of allegiance to our State, are interwreathed harmoniously, and can never come in conflict, nor clash. He who does his duty to the Union does his duty to the State; and he who does his duty to the State does his duty to the Union.”

Such were the grand sentences which embodied his intense patriotism, and burned in the hearts of the patriotic people.

At Fortress Monroe was a dilapidated fort; no supplies; not even water less than a mile. He had to create all. He had permission to buy horses, and when bought they were taken away. It was his merit that

*Disappointments never chilled his patriotism.*

He saw the importance of occupying Newport News, and he occupied it. At Great Bethel his plans met with a reverse. The plans

were right; but the utter inexperience of the officer sent in command, as well as the inexperience of subordinates, occasioned a repulse, which, although it was only a skirmish, seemed a great disaster to the country. The officer was one sent out by Gov. Andrew especially to be put in command, and Gen. Butler was not on the field. This reverse led Gen. Butler to originate a suggestion to the Secretary of War, which was afterwards adopted, and proved to be of incalculable value to the service. It was to have at different posts "a board appointed, composed of three or five, to whom the competency, efficiency, and propriety of conduct of a given officer might be submitted; and that upon the report of that board, approved by the commander and the department, the officer be dropped without the disgrace attending the sentence of a court-martial." To Gen. Butler belongs the proposal of the plan which weeded out incompetent officers East and West.

At Fortress Monroe, also, Gen. Butler solved for the administration the greatest question of the war: What was to be done with fugitive slaves? The occasion came when some slaves, who were to be sent by their master to work on rebel fortifications, sought refuge with Gen. Butler. He saw that it was an outrage upon humanity and on patriotism to give these fugitives back to their master; while, on the other hand, the administration was constitutionally careful not to hurt slavery. Gen. Butler blended the lawyer and the soldier; and the answer came to him as a flash of inspiration: "If they had been Col. Mallory's horses, or Col. Mallory's spades, or Col. Mallory's percussion-caps, he would have seized them and used them. Why not property more valuable for the purposes of the Rebellion than any other?" They were

### *Contraband of war!*

That magic phrase relieved the minds which still worried over the guaranties of the Constitution in favor of rebels. Said Theodore Winthrop, "An epigram abolished slavery in the United States." That epigram was Gen. Benjamin F. Butler's.

At Fortress Monroe Gen. Butler suppressed the liquor-traffic. He saw its evils. With his usual spirit, which would ask nothing of a private soldier which he would not ask of himself, he said in his order:—

"The general commanding . . . will not exempt himself from the operation of this order, but will not use it [wine or liquor] in his own quarters, as he would discourage its use in the quarters of any other officer."

The practical reply to Gen. Butler's "contraband" letter was his removal from command, which followed a few days after!

Gen. Wool superseded him; but Gen. Butler was appointed to command all the troops outside of the fortress. As such, with Gen. Wool's assent he commanded an expedition which he projected, and which reduced the forts at Hatteras Inlet. The rebel commander offered to submit upon certain specified terms. Gen. Butler demanded and received

### *Unconditional surrender.*

It was a brilliant success; and this success cheered the disheartened North, and gave Fort Warren, in Boston Harbor, twelve hundred prisoners of war.

### SPECIAL SERVICE.

Recruiting was at a stand-still. Gen. Butler recalled the government to his scheme of expelling the rebels from the Virginia peninsula. The authorities favored it.

For this purpose Gen. Butler needed troops. The President authorized him to go to New England, and

"Raise, organize, arm, uniform, and equip a volunteer force for the war, in the New-England States; not exceeding six regiments, of the maximum standard, of such arms and in such proportions and in such manner as he may judge expedient; and for this purpose his orders and requisitions on the quartermaster, ordnance, and other staff departments of the army, are to be obeyed and answered."

Before signing this order, the President took care to obtain the assent of all the New-England governors. It was thought that Gen. Butler's personal popularity would revive enlistments, and especially increase enthusiasm among his old political friends. It might also well distribute merited commissions to persons whom State officials might have overlooked.

The results were as anticipated. But unfortunately the work brought Gen. Butler into unhappy relations with one of the New-England governors, viz., Gov. Andrew. Gov. Andrew objected to having the enlisting and organizing of any forces in Massachusetts taken out of his hands. Both men were determined men. A controversy ensued which made a final breach between those two eminent and patriotic men. Whatever fault there was, was at Washington. The President was appealed to, and decided in favor of Gen. Butler. A late anonymous assault on Gen. Butler purports to quote some harsh words asserted to have been said by Gov. Andrew not long before his death, but gives no authority. Such an assertion is certainly impossible, in view of the fact that an intimate personal and political friend of Gov. Andrew's soon afterwards solicited from the general a *subscription for the help*

of the governor's family, and was cheerfully given five hundred dollars.

To hinder Gen. Butler, it was threatened that State aid would not be granted to the families of volunteers enlisted by Gen. Butler. The men were alarmed. Gen. Butler wrote to the commander of one of the regiments as follows:—

"I will personally, and from my private means, guarantee to the family of each soldier the aid which ought to be furnished to him by his town, to the same extent and amount that the State would be found to afford to other enlisted men, from and after this date, if the same is not paid by the Commonwealth to them as to other Massachusetts soldiers." "The only question that will be asked is, Are these men in the service of their country, shedding their blood in defence of the Constitution and the laws?"

The result of this magnificent pledge was the nucleus of the force which occupied NEW ORLEANS.

The result of the delays caused by the opposition of Gov. Andrew was, that Gen. Butler was not in season to clean out the Peninsula. But his troops were raised. The War Department said "Mobile." He was ready. Then it said "Texas," and he made a plan, which Gen. McClellan pronounced "able, lucid, and complete." He had got some regiments on shipboard, when the despatch came, "Don't sail; disembark!" It was because of the Mason and Slidell trouble with England. That trouble blew off, and Gen. Butler sailed with his command for Fortress Monroe. There were delays again. Secretary Stanton came into office, and he wanted a man like Butler, and gave him an ample hearing. In a conference one day, Mr. Stanton suddenly said, —

"Why can't New Orleans be taken?"

"It CAN," said Gen. Butler.

Gen. Butler had thought of it before. He went again at his books and his charts. Gen. McClellan said it would take fifty thousand men, and no such number could be spared. Gen. Butler talked with the Cabinet and with the President, and at last the President consented. The capture of New Orleans was due to the persistency of Benjamin F. Butler!

Gen. Butler asked for but fifteen thousand. McClellan felt that he could not spare a single soldier; and the necessary additions to Gen. Butler's gallant Massachusetts and New-England men were made up from outside sources. The necessary naval forces were put under the command of Capt. Farragut. Feb. 24, 1862, Gen. Butler said, —

"Good-by, Mr. President. We shall take New Orleans, or you will never see me again."

No one outside half a dozen persons guessed that New Orleans

was the destination. And not one of his regiments had been under fire!

Gen. Phelps was sent forward to Ship Island with the force which had been raised in New England, apparently for Mobile. A month he waited anxiously for Gen. Butler and the "Mississippi" transport. The "Mississippi," crowded with troops, had encountered a fearful storm, had run upon a shoal, and was got off with great difficulty, and badly leaking. Gen. Butler had taken it to near Hilton Head, men and stores removed, and the vessel repaired in the absence of all facilities. It ran aground again on leaving the harbor, and Gen. Butler placed a new officer in command. A gale was blowing seven days after, when the vessel steamed into the harbor of Ship Island, where for two days the vessel lay rolling, unable to land the troops.

A few hours after the troops were landed, Gen. Butler was in consultation with Capt. Farragut. The plan of operations agreed upon was the one substantially carried out. The orders to Gen. Butler by Gen. McClellan had said, —

"The first obstacle to be encountered, perhaps the only one, is the resistance offered by Forts St. Philip and Jackson. It is expected that the navy can reduce the works. . . . Should the navy fail to reduce the works, you will land your forces and siege train, and endeavor to breach the works, silence their fire, and carry them by assault."

The plan agreed upon was (1) that Capt. Porter, with twenty-one bomb-schooners, should anchor below the forts, and reduce them. The army should remain at the mouth of the river, and await the result. (2) If the bombardment failed, Farragut was to attempt to run by the forts; and, if he succeeded, Gen. Butler would take his troops to the rear of the forts, and endeavor to carry them. A week's time was to suffice for preparation.

Gen. Butler set to work with his usual energy, to do a month's work in a week's time. A hundred Massachusetts carpenters were detailed. A hundred boatmen were detailed to man "the thirty which were to nose their devious way through the reeds, creeks, pools, and sharks, in the rear of Fort St. Philip." Gen. Butler was ready in time.

The magnificent bombardment by Porter is matter of history; so is also the magnificent passage by the forts, of Farragut.

The fleets had run by, but the forts were not reduced by the terrific fire of six days. Said an educated engineer, after their surrender, —

"The navy passed the works, but did not reduce them. Fort St. Philip stands, with one or two slight exceptions, to-day without a scratch. Fort Jackson was subjected to a torrent of thirteen-inch and eleven-inch shells

during a hundred and forty-four hours. . . . It is as strong to-day as when the first shell was fired at it."

Gen. Butler landed the necessary portion of troops above the forts, by means of the bayous and the boats he had provided. The forts were completely invested by the army. Thus surrounded, a mutiny occurred in Fort Jackson, and three hundred men spiked the up-river guns, deserted, and surrendered. There were still strong garrisons, ample ammunition, and provisions for four months. But the rebel commander, completely invested, concluded to surrender!

The correspondent of "The New-York Herald," who boldly kept his place on a naval vessel in the daring passage by the forts, writes:—

"On the morning of the 26th, Gen. Butler having landed, the forts were invested on all sides. . . . The victory was now complete, and Gen. Butler was master of New Orleans. Justice requires that the glory of this grand achievement should be shared mutually by Gen. Butler and Capt. Farragut."

Gen. Lovell, rebel commander, evacuated New Orleans, and on the first day of May, 1862, Gen. Benjamin F. Butler

#### *Took possession of New Orleans.*

We do not need to re-write the familiar history of the occupation of New Orleans. The difficulties which the indomitable commander had to meet and conquer were incessant and endlessly diverse. From that day on which Gen. Butler occupied the Custom House, marching thither through an insulting, scowling, and dangerous mob, to the day when he left the city as tranquil and orderly as any city of the United States, the labors were incessant and perplexing.

He found a city defiant. The eloquent Soulé said that his first concern was for the tranquillity of the city, which could not be maintained as long as the troops remained in it, and urged their immediate removal. The people were not conquered, and could not be expected to behave as a conquered people. "Your soldiers can have no peace while they remain in our midst."

Gen. Butler replied, "I did not expect to hear a threat from Mr. Soulé on *this* occasion. I have been long accustomed to hear threats from Southern gentlemen in political conventions; but let me assure gentlemen present, that the time for tactics of that sort has passed, never to return. New Orleans *is* a conquered city. If not, why are we here? Have you opened your arms, and bid us welcome? Would you, or would you not, expel us if you could? New Orleans has been conquered by the forces of the United



States; and, by the laws of all nations, is subject to the will of the conquerors. Nevertheless I have proposed to leave the municipal government to the free exercise of all its powers, and I am answered by a threat. Gladly will I take every soldier out of the city the very day, the very hour, it is demonstrated to me that the city government can and *will* protect me from insult and danger."

An interview in the St. Charles Hotel, between the mayor and the general, had scarce begun when an aide came in to say that Gen. Williams feared he would not be able to control the mob. Gen. Butler replied, —

"Give my compliments to Gen. Williams, and tell him, if he finds he cannot control the mob, to open upon them with artillery."

The mayor and his friends sprang to their feet.

"Don't do that," exclaimed Mayor Monroe.

"Why not, gentlemen? The mob must be controlled. We can't have a disturbance in the street."

"Shall I go out, and speak to the people?" asked the mayor.

"Any thing you please, gentlemen."

But before long he could ride, with a single orderly, from one end of the city to the other, while the whole military force in the city was but two hundred and fifty men.

He found the city controlled for years by a merciless mob. He left it a city of peace and quiet. He did not hesitate to order the execution of the death-penalty on the man who tore down the American flag, tried and convicted; and he hesitated no more to order the same execution on Northern men who took the night for robbery. Even insulting women were silenced into decency.

The city was cursed with a worthless currency. His sagacious and decisive measures gave it a currency equal to that in any State of the Union.

The city had been the chosen field of yellow-fever. Its filth was proverbial. He had it cleansed, purified, quarantined, and not a case of the dreaded fever was known.

He established courts of justice, whose decisions were acknowledged with respect.

He instituted a system of successful free labor on the plantations. The first barrel of sugar made by the blacks under this system, he sent to President Lincoln. "The fact," said he, "that it will have no flavor of the cruel and degrading whip, will not, I know, render it less sweet to your taste."

He reported to the government as follows: —

"When I took possession of New Orleans I found the city nearly on the verge of starvation; the poor being utterly without means of procuring what food there was to be had. I endeavored to aid the city government

in the work of feeding the poor; but I soon found that the very distribution of food was a means faithlessly used to encourage the Rebellion. I was obliged, therefore, to take the whole matter into my own hands. It had become a subject of alarming importance and gravity. It became necessary to provide, from some source, the funds to procure the food. They could not be raised by city taxation in the ordinary form. These taxes were in arrears to more than one million of dollars. Besides, it would be unjust to tax the loyal citizens and honestly neutral foreigners to provide for a state of things brought about by the rebels and disloyal foreigners, who had conspired together to overthrow the authority of the United States, and establish the very result which was to be met.

"Further, in order to have a contribution effective, it must be upon those who have wealth to meet it. There seem to be no such fit subjects for such taxation as the cotton-brokers who had brought the distress upon the city by paralyzing commerce, and the subscribers to the rebel loan.

"With these convictions I issued General Order No. 55, which will explain itself, and have raised nearly the amount of the tax therein set forth. But for what purpose? Not a dollar has gone in any way to the use of the United States. I am now employing a thousand poor laborers, as matter of charity, upon the streets and wharves of the city, from this fund. I am distributing food to preserve from starvation nine thousand seven hundred and seven families, containing thirty-two thousand four hundred souls, daily; and this at an expense of seventy thousand dollars per month. I am sustaining, at an expense of two thousand dollars per month, five asylums for widows and orphans. I am aiding the charity hospital to the extent of five thousand dollars per month."

The tax was laid on men who had subscribed over a million of dollars to help the Rebellion. He took their own old subscription-paper, and assessed them, each in exact proportion!

During all the time, he had the vexatious enmity of the foreign consuls; a great mass of native secession within, and an armed enemy outside, his pickets. He met an attack of Breckenridge at Baton Rouge, and was victorious. He watched Port Hudson anxiously, and asked in vain for but two thousand men to stop the growing works which afterwards required tens of thousands. He armed the blacks, and equipped three regiments, commissioning officers of their own color, whom the government deprived of their commissions before it sent the brave men against Port Hudson.

Calumny followed him. Bland's vivid "Life of Gen. Butler" records his answer to one silly charge:—

"On moving into the residence of Gen. Twiggs, I found no plate; but a few days later one of the general's former servants informed me that a box of valuables was buried beneath the floor of a cellar. This I ordered dug up. I found with this box three elegant swords which had been presented to Gen. Twiggs in recognition of his public services in the Mexican war, with a lot of silver plate. The swords I forwarded to the President, with a recommendation that one of them be hung in the Patent Office, one in West Point Academy, and the other be presented to some officer of the army for distinguished services.

"The President adopted my recommendation, and laid it before Congress, where it rests still. The swords were still at the White House after Mr. Johnson became President; but at my request I was permitted to deposit them in a treasury-vault for safe keeping. The silver plate I ordered put back on to the sideboard, and during my residence there I used it as I did other ware and furniture; and on surrendering the command to my successor, Gen. Banks, *I turned it over to him, taking the receipt of his quartermaster for it.* I hear that it subsequently disappeared in some mysterious way; but I have no means of knowing who got it."

In December, 1862, he was recalled. No reason was given; but it is known that it was done at the dictation of France to our State Department.

On leaving, he issued an address to the citizens of New Orleans, which includes the following:—

"I shall speak in no bitterness, because I am not conscious of a single personal animosity. Commanding the Army of the Gulf, I found you captured, but not surrendered; conquered, but not orderly; relieved from the presence of an army, but incapable of taking care of yourselves. I restored order, punished crime, opened commerce, brought provisions to your starving people, reformed your currency, and gave you quiet protection, such as you had not enjoyed for many years.

"While doing this, my soldiers were subjected to obloquy, reproach, and insult.

"And now, speaking to you, who know the truth, I here declare that whoever has quietly remained about his business, affording neither aid nor comfort to the enemies of the United States, has never been interfered with by the soldiers of the United States.

"I do not feel that I have erred in too much harshness, for that harshness has ever been exhibited to disloyal enemies to my country, and not to loyal friends. To be sure, I might have regaled you with the amenities of British civilization, and yet been within the supposed rules of civilized warfare. You might have been smoked to death in caverns, as were the Covenanters of Scotland by the command of a general of the royal house of England; or roasted, like the inhabitants of Algiers during the French campaign; your wives and daughters might have been given over to the ravisher, as were the unfortunate dames of Spain in the Peninsular war; or you might have been scalped and tomahawked, as our mothers were at Wyoming by the savage allies of Great Britain in our own Revolution; your property could have been turned over to indiscriminate 'loot,' like the palace of the emperor of China; works of art which adorned your buildings might have been sent away, like the paintings of the Vatican; your sons might have been blown from the mouths of cannon, like the Sepoys at Delhi; and yet all this would have been within the rules of civilized warfare as practised by the most polished and the most hypocritical nations of Europe.

"But I have not so conducted. On the contrary, the worst punishment inflicted, except for criminal acts punishable by every law, has been banishment with labor to a barren island, where I encamped my own soldiers before marching here.

"It is true, I have levied upon the wealthy rebels, and paid out nearly half a million of dollars to feed forty thousand of the starving poor of all nations assembled here, made so by this war.

"I saw that this Rebellion was a war of the aristocrats against the middling men, — of the rich against the poor; a war of the land-owner against the laborer; that it was a struggle for the retention of power in the hands of the few against the many; and I found no conclusion to it, save in the subjugation of the few, and the disenfranchisement of the many. I therefore felt no hesitation in taking the substance of the wealthy, who had caused the war, to feed the innocent poor, who had suffered by the war. And I shall now leave you with the proud consciousness that I carry with me the blessings of the humble and loyal, under the roof of the cottage and in the cabin of the slave, and so am quite content to incur the sneers of the *salon*, or the curses of the rich.

"I found you trembling at the terrors of servile insurrection. All danger of this I have prevented by so treating the slave that he had no cause to rebel.

"I found the dungeon, the chain, and the lash, your only means of enforcing obedience in your servants. I leave them peaceful, laborious, controlled by the laws of kindness and justice.

"I have demonstrated that the pestilence can be kept from your borders.

"I have added a million of dollars to your wealth, in the form of new land from the batture of the Mississippi.

"I have cleansed and improved your streets, canals, and public squares, and opened new avenues to unoccupied land.

"I have given you freedom of elections, greater than you have ever enjoyed before.

"I have caused justice to be administered so impartially that your own advocates have unanimously complimented the judges of my appointment.

"There is but one thing that stands in the way.

"There is but one thing that at this hour stands between you and the government, — and that is slavery.

"The institution, cursed of God, which has taken its last refuge here, in his providence will be rooted out as the tares from the wheat, although the wheat be torn up with it.

"I have given much thought to this subject.

"I came among you, by teachings, by habit of mind, by political position, by social affinity, inclined to sustain your domestic laws, if by possibility they might be with safety to the Union.

"Months of experience and of observation have forced the conviction that the existence of slavery is incompatible with the safety either of yourselves or of the Union. As the system has gradually grown to its present huge dimensions, it were best if it could be gradually removed; but it is better, far better, that it should be taken out at once, than that it should longer vitiate the social, political, and family relations of your country. I am speaking with no philanthropic views as regards the slave, but simply of the effect of slavery on the master. See for yourselves.

"Look around you, and say whether this saddening, deadening influence has not all but destroyed the very framework of your society.

"I am speaking the farewell words of one who has shown his devotion to his country at the peril of his life and fortune, who in these words can have neither hope nor interest, save the good of those whom he addresses; and let me here repeat, with all the solemnity of an appeal to heaven to bear me witness, that such are the views forced upon me by experience."

\* Upon the retirement of Major Bell from the bench of the provost court, the lawyers and others who had attended it presented to the major a valuable cane, accompanying the gift with expressions of esteem and gratitude, far more precious than any gift could be.

“Harper’s Weekly,” under the same editor as now, said, —

“When the history of this eventful period [of the war] comes to be written, few actors upon the scene will win more encomiums from the historian than Gen. Butler. His task has been one of supereminent difficulty. He was placed in command of the commercial metropolis of rebellion, and called upon to hold it with a force about one-third as great as that which fled at his approach. He had to govern a city, nine-tenths of whose people had relatives in the rebel army, and who were savagely hostile to him. For ten years before he came, New Orleans had been in the hands of organized bands of Thugs, murderers, and robbers, who had overawed the authorities, and who, under the disorderly period of rebel supremacy, had perpetrated every crime with perfect impunity. For years the season during which he was to hold New Orleans had been so unhealthy that it was as much as a man’s life was worth to spend a week in the place; yet he was to stay here with five or six thousand Northern, unacclimated soldiers. On him devolved the duty of regulating the civil relations of non-combatant rebels toward the Union; of tracing out a path for the safe administration of military government in a rebel city; of securing some supplies of sugar and cotton for the North, and food for the starving families of rebels; of dealing with an extremely factions, treacherous, and rascally gang of foreigners, sympathizers with the Rebellion, and claiming the protection of their respective governments as a cloak for schemes of treason.

“The historian will decide that Gen. Butler’s success in grappling with these unparalleled difficulties was such as to entitle him to the highest rank among statesmen.”

“Men loved him,” says Abbott’s History, “in proportion to their loyalty and truth.”

“The Boston Transcript” inquired

“Whether the remarkable onslaught in certain quarters upon Major-Gen. Butler is not owing to the political change that has come over him, and his fidelity to Democratic principles against an insurgent aristocracy?”

Its language also seems like a prediction of present times: —

“The conflict is really between aristocracy and democracy: the few who would lord it as a non-producing oligarchy, living upon the unrequited toil of others, and the immense majority of freemen seeking the equal property that comes of labor.”

The first chapter of Acts and Resolves of Massachusetts Legislature, 1863, reads thus: —

“Resolved, That the thanks of the Senate and House of Representatives are hereby tendered to Major-Gen. Benjamin F. Butler, for the energy, ability, and success characterizing his late administration and command of the Department of the Gulf.”

And it was “approved” by John A. Andrew, governor.

In November, 1863, Gen. Butler was assigned to the command of the Department of Virginia and North Carolina. Much of his force was colored troops, of which he recruited a large number.

His headquarters were at Fortress Monroe. It was in this district that at different times some trade is said to have been lawlessly held by Northern speculators with the rebels, by the connivance of some officers. It is enough to say of *his* administration, that in no single instance was a permit granted, but that in one case he merely transmitted to Gen. Shepley, his subordinate, an order signed and issued by the President of the United States.

In the spring of 1864, Gen. Grant was general-in-chief. In conference, the plan of Gen. Butler's part of the campaign was agreed to. In accordance he advanced up the James, re-enforced by the Tenth Corps, under Gilmore, and seized City Point and Bermuda Hundreds, as agreed upon. He went within nine miles of Richmond, and learned that there was little force there. He determined to send a column at once, and occupy it, as could have been done. His corps commanders opposed it and prevented it. They were of the class who did not believe in a volunteer general's doing any thing. Gen. Butler returned within his assigned lines at Bermuda Hundreds, was attacked by Beauregard with a large force, and gallantly repulsed him; and proceeded to fortify.

He planned to take Petersburg; but, when his column of eleven thousand was ready, Gen. Grant had to call them to his help at Cold Harbor, where over five thousand of the eleven were killed or wounded.

He again prepared to capture Petersburg, four miles away. The defences were carried. But the subordinate general had delayed all day, and again waited all night, and Lee sent reinforcements.

Gen. Butler proposed to turn the rebel batteries at Trent's Beach, by cutting a short gap in a peninsula so as to allow our gunboats to pass up. Gen. Grant approved it, and it was begun. It was nearly completed, when the naval commander had it stopped on the ground that the rebels might come down through it! The commodore was afterwards convicted by court-martial, for cowardice.

Gen. Butler in September, by consent of the commander, organized an expedition to attack the fortifications on Newmarket Heights, and on Fort Harrison. Both were carried. Gen. Lee then sent two of his best divisions to attack Butler's forces. A sharp battle resulted in brilliant victory for Gen. Butler. Sixteen battle-flags were captured.

During this summer, also, he conducted the delicate business of the exchange of prisoners between the two powers.

In October, 1864, Gen. Butler was sent for by Secretary Stanton. The secretary showed him papers which proved an organized

military conspiracy, especially to seize the polls in New-York City on election day, and at all hazards by force cast and count votes. There were then *thirty thousand* Southern rebels in New-York City. The President sent Gen. Butler to New York as commander "of the forces for the preservation of the peace of the city and State of New York." His forces were mainly New-York soldiers, from the army of the James, about thirty-five hundred men. He issued a proclamation. He told them that it would be unhealthy for men not citizens of New York, to attempt to vote! They believed him. He kept in the city, besides his orderlies, only a hundred men; but he placed his gunboats where their shot could sweep important streets. The year before, the armed mob had burned, pillaged, and murdered, at pleasure. With Gen. Butler there, his name was enough. The conspiracy failed, and New York had a fair, quiet, honest election.

That Gen. Butler accomplished so much as he did while in command of the army of the James, is surprising. The secret of his hinderances and difficulties he could not make public. But Gen. Grant hinted at it in 1878, when he had come to understand the facts in the case. He said, —

"As it was, I confronted Lee, and held him and all his hosts far from Richmond and the James; while I sent, the same day of my advance across the Rapidan, a force by the James River, sufficient, as I thought, to have captured all south of Richmond to Petersburg, and hold it. I believe now, that if Gen. Butler had had two corps commanders such as I might have selected, had I known the material of the entire army as well as I did afterwards, he would have done so; and would have threatened Richmond itself, so as materially to have aided me farther north."

The war ended in victory; and after four years of continuous service Gen. Butler returned to civil life, to his home, and the practice of his profession.

In 1866 he was

*Called into public life again,*

and was chosen to the Fortieth Congress, by a vote of 9,021 against 2,833. His magnificent public services were too fresh in the minds of the people, to allow the ring-progeny of the old exclusives to show its head. In 1868 that remnant of oligarchy, hereditary right and corporation power, exerted itself. It bolted from the regular nomination of Gen. Butler, and induced Mr. Dana to enter the field. Mr. Lord secured 5,061, Gen. Butler 13,109, and Mr. Dana, the hereditary-right candidate, 1,811 votes. Gen. Butler was again triumphantly, and this time peacefully, chosen in 1870, to the Forty-second Congress, and again in 1872. In 1874 the ring adopted different tactics, and ordered its hench-

men boldly to vote for the opposition candidate against a regular nominee. In the great flurry of that year, these tactics were successful, and Gen. Butler was defeated. But in 1876 he was again the regular candidate of the party. It was useless to try again the experiment of carrying over any considerable body to the opposite party. Judge Hoar therefore ran as a bolter, in the hope of withdrawing a sufficient number of votes to elect the nominee of the opposition. The result was, Judge Hoar had 1,955 votes, Gen. Butler 12,100.

Thus triumphantly sustained by the people, and with five terms in Congress, at the end of this term Gen. Butler declined further service. The people paid no special attention to the next convention, and the ring-managers were therefore free to pass some absurd resolutions in the interest of the faction which had cast *one-sixth* of the party-vote in the district.

In Congress Gen. Butler could not be useless. He was for two Congresses chairman of the Judiciary Committee. He was chairman of the Committee on Revision of the Laws, by whose great work the present *Revised Statutes* of the United States came into existence. In his second term he was chairman of the Committee of Reconstruction. The suppression of the Ku-Klux was due to the bill which he framed

The bill by which

#### *The "Alabama" award*

was distributed was drawn by him, and by his persistence carried through. It properly distributed their just dues to Massachusetts citizens to the amount of *four millions* of dollars, for losses by rebel cruisers. It is noticeable that under this award Gen. Butler refused to act as attorney for any claimant except in two or three instances of widows, poor shipmasters, &c., who had no means, and for whom he worked *without fee or reward*. Not that it would have been wrong; indeed, another member of Congress from Massachusetts, chairman of the Committee on Resolutions in the Republican Convention of 1879, is well understood to have been fortunate enough to collect a *quarter of a million* of dollars as commissions in the cases under this award by Congress.

In this connection it may be well to refer to a recent assault, in which Gen. Butler is charged with injuring the

#### *Fund: for naval pensions.*

It is charged that he was instrumental in reducing the rate of interest paid by government on funds held for these naval pensions.

The simple fact is, the fund proved to be so much larger than



anybody had anticipated, that nobody knew what to do with the income. It far more than sufficed to pay all possible pensions. Gen. Butler found that a raid on that income was in preparation in behalf of certain high officers. He therefore, with the government, said it was better to reduce the interest, and thus

*Relieve the people,*

than have this money pamper certain well-provided-for men. The result is that, even now, the income is so large that it not only pays liberal pensions, but has an excess which nobody knows how to expend!

Gen. Butler in Congress had his own ideas as to *currency*. Perhaps the course of events has passed by some of them. He believed it the province of the *government of the people* to furnish all the currency demanded by the wants of business. If profit was to be made upon manufacturing a currency, he believed that the people, by their government, should have that profit. He believed that paper money, and bonds bearing a low rate of interest, should be interconvertible. Two points in his faith have been carried; i.e., the remonetizing of silver, and the receiving by the government its own paper in payment of dues. All the "resumption" there is was impossible without *these two*, and without the great harvests here and the bad harvests abroad.

Nor do we refer to these because they are an issue in this State election. We refer to them only because partial features have already been adopted by Government. But we do recall the fact that his views upon the currency were not some late invention. They were *all* fully developed in a speech Jan. 12, 1869. He made *no concealment*, and with that speech before the State he was again chosen to Congress by the Republican party in 1870, 1872, and 1876!

In the late Congress Gen. Butler spoke

*Against the payment of Southern war-claims.*

A recent anonymous campaign document most remarkably twists an incidental allusion into making him "an advocate of rebel pensions!" According to their own quotations, when accused of saying this as an inference, he distinctly *denied* that he said he was in favor of it! The article is a tissue of garbled misquotations. Scarcely a sentence agrees with the official record. In the main paragraph, which it purports to quote exactly, giving quotation-marks, it squarely omits the word "*magnanimity*" towards maimed Southern soldiers, and inserts in place of it the word "brotherhood" with them! It represents Gen. Butler

as willing to have the national government assume the war-debts of "all" the States, when he carefully limited it to the *loyal* States. His reference to helping maimed Southern soldiers was an incidental one, to the effect that if the South would abandon all war-claims, and the South so act that "all sectional differences and bitterness . . . will pass away *as our children take our places* with reverence for our institutions, with love of country, with veneration for its flag as a symbol of its power and glory,"—the "*magnanimity*" of the North might at some time, out of "pity or humanity," relieve maimed soldiers at the South, to "secure our country peace forever." That is, he saw no more objection to such charity years onward, than there now was to putting a *Confederate brigadier-general into a Republican Cabinet!*

It was in the line of Gen. Butler's legal business to endeavor to secure for the men of Farragut's expedition the prize-money which a certain construction of law would give in the capture at New Orleans. Gen. Butler and two others undertook to secure it. *Seven years* it took to obtain a favorable decision! Complaint is made that he charged a large commission. The facts are, first, but for his seven-years' pressure *nothing* would have been obtained. Secondly, he *never presented a bill*. The *court itself*, without application, assigned the amounts where it thought justice demanded. Of the three counsel, the other two assigned to Gen. Butler what they thought proper, and he received it without complaint. His share was hardly a *decent fraction* of the fees demanded by the Massachusetts Republican member of Congress in the "Alabama" claims.

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A late assault upon Gen. Butler, which its circulators are ashamed to father, rakes up an exploded story of "salary grab." That is, it says that the Forty-third Congress, at the last part of its session, adopted the appropriation for salaries, covering the period of that Congress. It increased the salaries; and it increased those of the President and of the judges of the Supreme Court, as they still remain. The main accusation is that the bill voted "back pay."

The fact is, the bill was brought into the House without Gen. Butler's knowledge! It was referred to the Judiciary Committee, of which he was chairman. That committee instructed him to report it. He did so. He advocated it. Poor members complained that they could not live on their pay. Perhaps *he was* mistaken; but, being rich enough, he thought it ungenerous to deny the appeal of poorer men.

He looked at precedents, and he found that every *Massachusetts legislature* which had ever increased the pay of members had voted "back pay." He saw that in this State in 1866 every *judge of the Supreme Court* had taken "back pay." He saw that in preceding Congresses *five different times* "back pay" had been voted. In 1856, on the last night of the session, the salary was raised over sixty-seven per cent, and back pay given; and *eight Massachusetts members* voted for it, when it passed by *one vote*, — John McLean, Richard M. Johnson, Daniel Webster, Stephen A. Douglas, Lyman Trumbull, and *Henry Wilson of Massachusetts*, voted for it. In 1866 the "back-salary grab" was voted for by *N. P. Banks and Alexander H. Rice* of Massachusetts. In 1856 Sumner, Wilson, Boutwell, Baldwin, Dawes, Washburne, — *all took their back pay*. Under the vote now assailed, among those who took from the treasury their "back pay," and never refunded it, was Mr. George F. Hoar of Massachusetts!

Gen. Butler advocated the bill for increased pay, simply because poor men said that the then pay was too small for them. It was nothing to him. But he wanted that *poor men* might be able to go to Congress. Perhaps he was mistaken; but, if his kindly sympathy was at fault, it was a fault of a heart *on the side of the people*.

Patriots, however, can turn from such petty malice to contemplate Gen. Butler's

*Grand work for maimed soldiers.*

The war had closed. He saw in the streets maimed men, men with arms gone, men with legs cut off, — almost beggars. Men who had earned a good living before they volunteered to follow the flag, were almost paupers. It was a saddening sight.

It was Gen. Butler's happy thought, to erect HOMES for such, where the Government could care for them. Accordingly he framed a bill for that purpose, appropriating certain funds for the Homes, and establishing a board for their management. It was incorporated in 1866. Although the President of the United States is a member, Gen. Butler was made its president. Its work has established Homes at Augusta, Me., Hampton, Va., Dayton, O., and Milwaukee, Wis. Twenty-seven hundred acres of land, and comfortable homes for eight thousand maimed veterans, are the result. The funds allow an expenditure of nine hundred thousand dollars a year by a grateful country. The plan, the construction, the administration, have been Gen. Butler's for all these years!

And yet the vultures who cannot let alone the holiest feeling of a

soldier's sympathy with his maimed comrades, have made upon Gen. Butler an attack, in 1879, on his connection with the Home. The author of that dastardly and anonymous attack ingeniously quotes a portion only of Gen. Butler's own testimony before a Congressional committee, in order to attempt to show irregularities in the use of funds, by a man whose fortune makes it an absurdity. The point of the charge is that in the spring of 1869, the *bank account* of the funds was not drawn below \$110,107.92; on which sum, it is said, the Home got no interest for a short time. Neither did Gen. Butler! Sometimes, indeed, Gen. Butler *overdrew* for the Home, occasionally as high as \$86,000, for which he was *personally* responsible. In a work involving a *million of dollars*, it is not very surprising that the board should once, while engaged in purchasing and building, have to its credit a sum of \$110,107.92! Such a cavil is significant of weakness in the mind of any *business* man.

The writer of course omitted to state that, after the most searching investigation, the committee, composed partly of Republicans and partly of Democrats, made a unanimous report, not only completely exonerating the general, but thoroughly indorsing his course. The assault is but one of a mass of exploded and disproved falsehoods.

A complete answer is found in the fact that Gen. B. F. Butler has just received, for the thirteenth time, an election, by the unanimous vote of the board of managers of the National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers, to the position of president and acting treasurer.

The gentlemen now comprising the board are: Rutherford B. Hayes, President of the United States; Morrison R. Waite, chief justice of the Supreme Court of the United States; Major-Gen. John H. Martindale, an officer in the late war, and since the attorney-general of the State of New York; the Hon. Frederick Smyth, ex-governor of the State of New Hampshire, and now president of a national bank in Manchester, and a man of large and varied interests; Col. Leonard A. Harris, ex-mayor of Cincinnati, and now chairman of the Ohio Democratic State Committee; Gen. Thomas O. Osborn, United States minister to Buenos Ayres; the Hon. Hugh L. Bond, one of the most prominent Republicans in the State of Maryland; Col. John A. Martin, a prominent Republican of Kansas; and Gen. Richard Coulter, an officer in the Mexican war and in the late civil war, and a Democratic candidate for Congress in Pennsylvania.

All but two of these gentlemen are trusted leaders in the Republican party, and have had opportunity to know, to the fullest

extent, the record of Gen. Butler in office. The trust which they have given him is a sacred and important one. No member of this board would hesitate to vote against him, if they knew any cause. Their indorsement is sufficient.

Yet let it not be forgotten that this magnificent property of 2,704 acres of land, laid out into lawns, groves, and gardens; a hundred and fifty buildings, some of them large and imposing, and most of them of brick or stone; with water, gas, heating-apparatus, and sewers; with accommodations for *eight thousand maimed veterans*, — under Gen. Butler's supervision, *cost less* than the single insane-asylum at Danvers, built by the "ring" for five hundred patients!

No wonder the "Commissions" who spend the money of the Commonwealth dread the prospect of the election of Benjamin F. Butler as governor of Massachusetts.

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Gen. Butler had been five terms in Congress. He had retired by his own act. The last election was for the term ending March 3, 1879. He had been triumphantly sustained by the people, the ring-men to the contrary notwithstanding.

But in 1878 fifty-one thousand eight hundred and seventy-four voters of Massachusetts signed a paper inviting him to become a candidate for the office of Governor.

Gen. Butler had, with other citizens, seen the growing hold of the rings upon Massachusetts. He saw that boards had increased in number, usurping powers, and evading responsibilities, and of which there had been *over seventy* in the last twenty years, their fees, emoluments, and expenditures in the last ten years having amounted to *over two million and one hundred and forty thousand dollars*; *twenty-four* commissions in existence last year; *one thousand and fifty* officers and employees, drawing money from the treasury last year, outside of the legislature.

He saw the annual ordinary expenses of the constitutional part of the government increased from one million in 1859 to nearly double in 1877. He saw the State debt increased, *not including any war debt*, from less than seven millions in 1860 to *over twenty-two millions*. He saw the State had been involved in partnership with unprofitable enterprises, to the amount of *twenty millions* more. He saw that the managers, who had obtained power upon a principle, had lived upon that record, made unequal legislation, held their grasp with a firm grip, and could not be expected to reform their management of the State. He accepted the nomination.

How to defeat Butler, ~~was~~ the question. The press was almost all against him. The moneyed power feared him. Perhaps "The Boston Herald" of Sept. 12, 1878, gave a hint:—

"There will be no shot-guns or threats. Every thing will be managed with decorum, adorned by noble sentiments. But the men who oppose Butler employ three-fourths, if not seven-eighths, of the labor of the State. They honestly believe that Butler's election would injure their prosperity. They know that idle hands are waiting to do their work. It is not to be expected that they will look on indifferently, and see their employees vote for a destructive like Butler. Human nature is much the same in Massachusetts and Mississippi. Only methods are different. Brains, capital, and enterprise will tell in any community. It is very improper, of course, to intimidate voters, but THERE IS A WAY OF GIVING ADVICE THAT IS QUITE CONVINCING."

The ring committee called together the manufacturers in a secret meeting, and a policy adopted, which was felt at the polls. That many persons compelled those they employed to vote against Butler, on pain of being discharged if they refused, is well established.

In spite of every obstacle, the people gave Benjamin F. Butler 109,435 votes. It was the highest number ever had by a defeated candidate. He was defeated.

Another election is at hand. There are no national issues this year. The Congressmen were chosen last year. It is not a practical question, affected by any vote here this year, whether there is bulldozing in *Mississippi*: it is whether poor voters in *Massachusetts* shall be bulldozed out of their rights as freemen by threats of starvation to their families. It is not now a question as to the finances of the United States, but whether economy shall be restored in our State government, abuses be corrected, taxation be lowered, rings be broken up. Last year the managers, frightened at Gen. Butler's exposures, hastened to promise reform. A little show of retrenchment was made, but nothing to touch the vitality of the ring-grasp. This year the leaders boldly deny the need of further reform.

It is evident that the State government needs, if it is to be purged, such a democratic spirit, clear intellect, accurate knowledge, firm hand, and fearless independence, as have been displayed in all his public career, by the honest and patriotic Benjamin F. Butler.

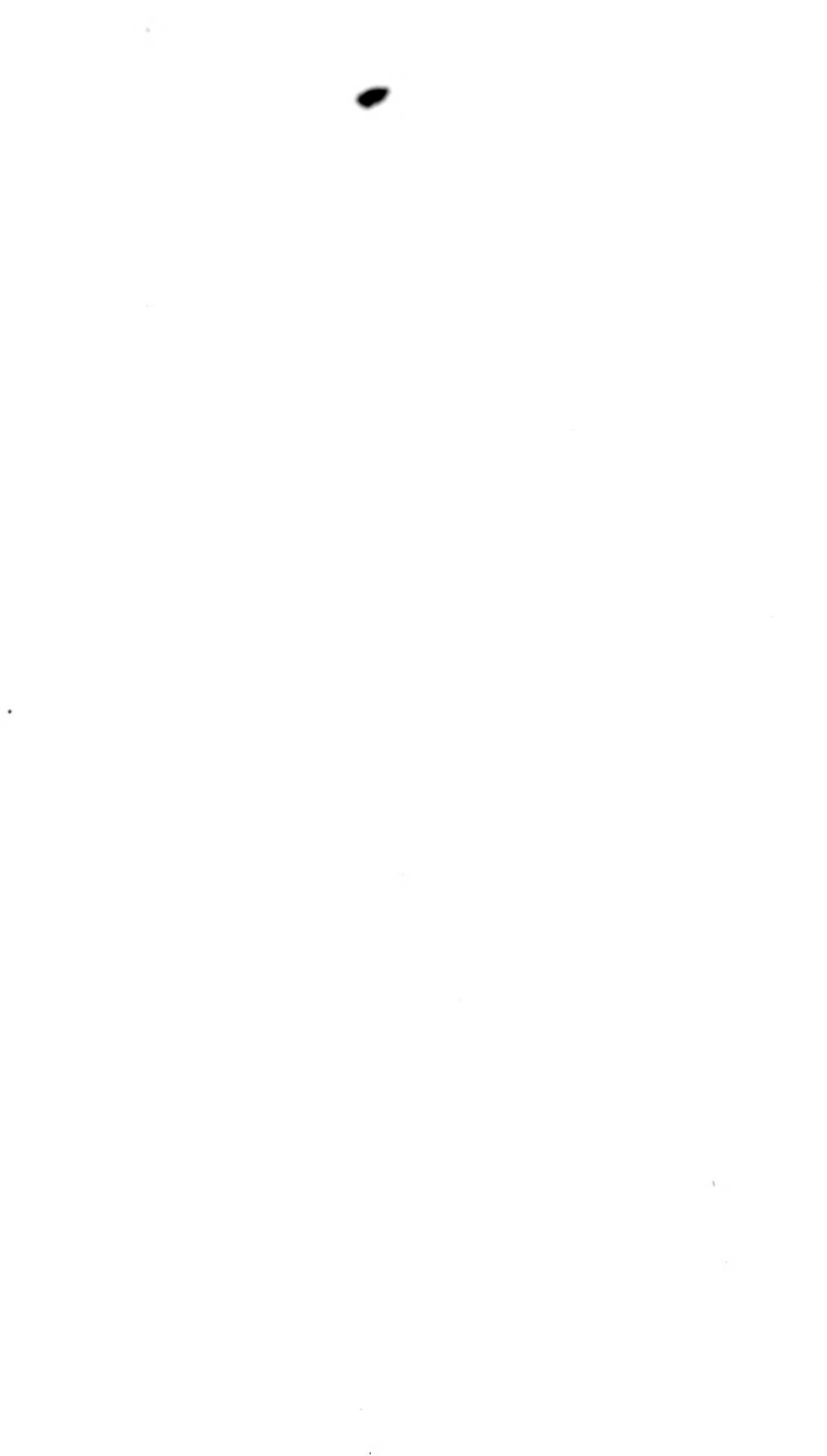
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Published by order of Committee.

JOHN I. BAKER, *Secretary*.

OCTOBER, 1879.













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